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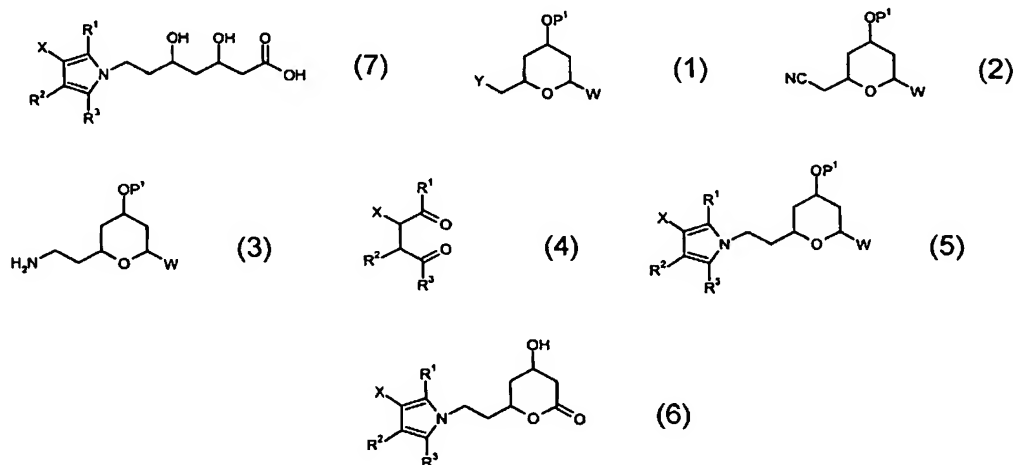
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- (71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): **AVECIA LIMITED** [GB/GB]; Hexagon House, Blackley, Manchester M9 8ZS (GB).
- (72) Inventors; and
- (75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): **MOODY, David**, John [GB/GB]; Wellbrae House,, Wellbrae, Falkland, Fife KY15 7AY (GB). **WIFFEN, Jonathan, William** [GB/GB]; PO Box A38, Leeds Road, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD22 1FF (GB).
- (74) Agents: **GAIRNS, Raymond, Stevenson et al.**; Avecia Limited, Intellectual Property Group, PO Box 42, Hexagon House, Blackley, Manchester M9 8ZS (GB).
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(54) Title: PROCESS AND INTERMEDIATE COMPOUNDS USEFUL IN THE PREPARATION OF STATINS, PARTICULARLY ATORVASTATIN



(57) Abstract: There is provided a process for the preparation of a compound of formula (7) or salts thereof: wherein R¹ represents a hydrogen or a hydrocarbyl group, R² represents a hydrogen or substituent group, R³ represents a hydrogen or a hydrocarbyl group, and X represents a hydrogen or substituent group which comprises a) cyanating a compound of formula (1): wherein Y represents a halo group, preferably Cl or Br; P¹ represents hydrogen or a protecting group, and W represents =O or -OP², in which P² represents hydrogen or a protecting group, to give a compound of formula (2); b) reducing the compound of formula (2) to give a compound of formula (3); coupling the compound of formula (3) with a compound of formula (4): to give a compound of formula (5); when W represents -OP², deprotecting and then oxidising the compound of formula (5) to give a compound of formula (6); and e) subjecting the compound of formula (5) when W represents =O, or compound of formula (6) to ring-opening, and removal of any remaining protecting groups, to give a compound of formula (7) or salts thereof.



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